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EXAMINER

STRANGE, AARON N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2153

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/839,847

Applicant(s)

NEWMAN ET AL.

Examiner

Aaron Strange

Art Unit

2153

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-27, 29 and 30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-27, 29 and 30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-12, 14-27 and 29-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informalities: There appears to be a typographical error "said packet to said first" in lines 2-3.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-4,6,7,15-19,21,22 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. ("Networking, Videoconferencing and Collaborative Environments, 1998) (cited as reference V in the PTO-892 of 8/25/2004) in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604).

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5. With regard to claims 1 and 16, Galvez discloses a virtual room videoconferencing system for transporting packets of videoconferencing data, (Fig 3) comprising:

a first and second computing device (Fig 3, 1 and 5);

a first reflector (Fig 3, 3) connected to said first computing device and a second reflector (Fig 3, "Reflector") coupled to said second computing device;

a tunnel connecting said first reflector to said second reflector (Fig 3, 4).

Galvez fails to specifically disclose that the first and second computing devices use different protocols, a gateway coupled to the first device for enabling conferencing using said first protocol, or a third computing device coupled to said first and second computing devices for enabling conferencing between said first and second computing devices independent of the first and second protocol.

Tucker discloses a similar system for videoconferencing (Col 2, Lines 46-54) and teaches the use of a gateway (Fig 7,708) to enable conferencing using a first protocol (H.323) (Col 9, Lines 50-54) and a computing device (H.320 gateway) coupled to multiple clients for enabling conferencing between the clients independent of their differing protocols (Col 9, Lines 55-63). These would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since it would have allowed various clients using different protocols to conference with each other without requiring the clients to change any settings or software.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use gateways to enable conferencing using a first

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protocol, such as H.320, and a third computing device for enabling conferencing between clients independent of their differing protocols.

6. With regard to claims 2 and 17, Galvez further discloses a packet wherein said packet travels to said first and second computing devices (Packets are sent across the tunnel when participants are in the same virtual room on both sides) (Page 5, Line 1 to Page 6, Line 1).

7. With regard to claims 3 and 18, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries an audio signal (Page 5, Line 3).

8. With regard to claims 4 and 19, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries a video signal (Page 5, Line 3).

9. With regard to claims 6 and 21, Galvez further discloses a user interface (Page 4, Lines 27-28).

10. With regard to claims 7 and 22, Galvez further discloses that said user interface is in a web browser (Web interface) (Page 4, Lines 27-28).

11. With regard to claims 15 and 30, Tucker further discloses that said computing devices are Mbone clients or H.323 clients (Col 2, Lines 46-54).

12. Claims 5 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) in further view of Ruiu ("An Overview of MPEG-2").

13. With regard to claims 5 and 20, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose that said video signal is compressed in an MPEG 2 format.

Ruiu teaches that the MPEG 2 format is a very efficient and well known video compression method, which converts analog or digital video signals into efficiently transported digital packets. Using MPEG 2 compressions allows video signals to be transmitted using as little as 1/30 of the required bandwidth of the uncompressed signal (Page 2, Lines 1-20). Use of MPEG 2 to compress the video signal would have been advantageous since it would have significantly reduced the bandwidth required to transmit the signal over the network, increasing the overall quality of the transmission.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use MPEG 2 to compress the video signal since it can significantly reduce the bandwidth required to transmit the video signal across the network.

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14. Claims 8 and 23 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) in further view of McCormack et al. (US 6,212,195).

15. With regard to claims 8 and 23, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), including one or more packets carrying audio signals to said first and second computing devices (Page 5, Line 3), it fails to disclose an algorithm configured to determine a single packet from said packet and said one or more additional packets wherein said single packet has a largest audio magnitude.

McCormack teaches a method of choosing between a plurality of incoming audio streams to a conference comprising analyzing the packets to determine which packet has the largest magnitude, and choosing to use that packet as the audio source and discarding the other packets (Col 7, Lines 10-13). This gives priority to the loudest speaker and prevents a combination of audio signals from being played simultaneously, which would make it difficult to understand the speakers.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to analyze incoming audio packets when a plurality of audio packets are received simultaneously to determine which packet has the largest audio magnitude. This allows a single audio stream to be chosen and played to the conference, eliminating the sound of multiple speaking simultaneously. This makes it easier to understand the speakers by limiting the system to one speaker at a time.

16. Claims 9-12 and 24-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) in further view of DeGollado et al. (US 6,411,623).

17. With regard to claims 9 and 24, Galvez discloses a virtual room videoconferencing system (Fig 3) comprising:

- a first and second computing device (Fig 3, 1 and 2);
- a first reflector connected to said first and second computing devices (Fig 3, 3);
- a tunnel connecting said first reflector to a second reflector (Fig 3, 4).

However, Galvez fails to specifically disclose a first encoder/decoder box connected to the first computing device for encoding/decoding video conference data for the first computing device using said first protocol or a third computing device connected to said first and second computing devices for enabling conferencing independent of the first and second protocols.

Tucker discloses a similar system for videoconferencing (Col 2, Lines 46-54) and teaches the use of a computing device (H.320 gateway) coupled to multiple clients for enabling conferencing between the clients independent of their differing protocols (Col 9, Lines 55-63). These would have been an advantageous addition to the system disclosed by Galvez since it would have allowed various clients using different protocols to conference with each other without requiring the clients to change any settings or software.

DeGollado also discloses a similar system for distribution of audio/video data (Col 5, Lines 44-46). DeGollado teaches using a first encoder/decoder box connected to a first and second computing device and a second encoder/decoder box connected to a third computing device (Col 6, Lines 14-36 and Fig 2). This allows the video signals from each device to be encoded for transfer over the network and decoded by the receiving devices.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use gateways to enable conferencing using a first protocol, such as H.320, and a third computing device for enabling conferencing between clients independent of their differing protocols.

18. With regard to claims 10 and 25, Galvez further discloses a packet wherein the packet travels to said first and second computing devices (Packets are sent across the tunnel when participants are in the same virtual room on both sides)(Page 5, Line 1 to Page 6, Line 1).

19. With regard to claims 11 and 26, Galvez further discloses that said packet carries streaming video (Page 5, Line 3).

20. With regard to claims 12 and 27, Galvez further discloses that said streaming video is used with a video player (Page 5, Fig 1 and 2).

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21. Claims 14 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galvez et al. in view of Tucker et al. (US 6,590,604) in further view of Zhu et al. (US 6,691,154).

22. With regard to claims 14 and 29, while the system disclosed by Galvez and Tucker shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose a shared desktop configured to be accessed by at least said first and second computing devices.

Zhu et al. (Zhu, hereafter) teaches the use of a shared desktop as a means for one or more users of a conferencing system to share control of a desktop, allowing changes made by any user to be reflected in the desktop displayed to the other users (Co1 5, Line 42 to Col 6, Line 4). This would provide several advantages by allowing conference participants to exchange information via the shared desktop such as demonstrating how to operate a software program.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a shared desktop to the system disclosed by Galvez. The addition of a shared desktop would allow conference participants to exchange additional information through such operations as demonstrating the operation of a software program.


Conclusion

23. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron Strange whose telephone number is 571-272-3959. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glen Burgess can be reached on 571-272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AS
3/6/2006



KRISNA LIM
PRIMARY EXAMINER